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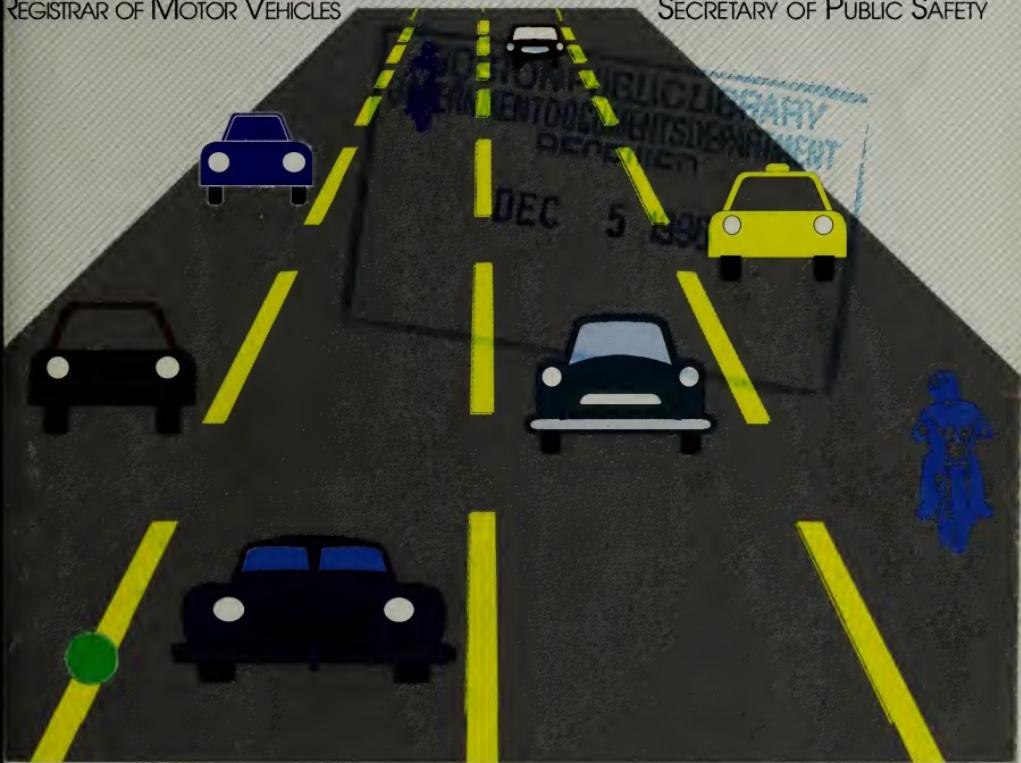
# Motorists' License Manual



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# **THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS**

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# **DRIVERS' LICENSE MANUAL**

This Driver's License Manual is designed to prepare you for your examination when applying for a Class D operator's license, motorcycle license or Learner's Permit. Applicants for Class A, B, C or School Bus operator's certificate must learn this manual as well as the *Commercial Driver's License Manual* in order to obtain a Class A, B or C license.

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# PART I — LICENSING RULES AND PROCEDURES



## DEFINITIONS

**AUTOMOBILE:** Any motor vehicle except a motorcycle.

**TRUCK:** A motor vehicle registered as a commercial vehicle having a registered gross weight in excess of twenty-six thousand pounds.

**TRUCK TRAILER COMBINATION:** A truck having a registered gross weight in excess of twenty-six thousand pounds drawing a trailer having a registered gross weight in excess of ten thousand pounds.

**TRACTOR:** A motor vehicle designed and used for drawing a semi-trailer.

**SEMI-TRAILER:** A trailer designed and used in combination with a tractor such that some part of the weight of such trailer and that of its load rests upon and is carried by the tractor.

**BUS:** A motor vehicle designed or used for the transportation of persons and having permanent seating accommodations for fifteen or more persons in addition to the operator.

**SCHOOL BUS:** Any motor vehicle being used to:

1. Transport school pupils to and from school; or
2. Transport children enrolled in a camp or recreational program *except* the following:
  - a. any vehicle that is used in cases of emergency not more than five days;
  - b. any vehicle that is used while also picking up passengers under a certificate from the Department of Public Utilities;
  - c. a motor vehicle carrying no more than 8 persons in addition to the driver.

**SCHOOL PUPIL:** Any person enrolled in any school, kindergarten through grade twelve, or enrolled in any program for day care services, or in any program for children with special needs as defined in Chapter 71B, Section 1 or in any organized day or Summer camp program or any activity supported by said schools.

**MOTORCYCLE:** A motorcycle is:

1. Any motor vehicle that has a driver's seat or saddle and has no more than three wheels in contact with the ground.
2. Any bicycle with a motor or driving wheel attached *except* the following:
  - a. Golf carts;
  - b. Industrial three wheeled trucks;
  - c. A motor vehicle on which the driver and passenger are in an enclosed cab;
  - d. Motorized bicycles (moped).

**MOPEDS (MOTORIZED BICYCLES):** According to Massachusetts law, a Moped falls under the definition of a "motorized bicycle," and in order to be classified as a "Moped" it must comply with the following:

1. A pedal bicycle which has a helper motor, or a non-pedal bicycle which has a motor;
2. A cylinder capacity of no more than fifty cubic centimeters;
3. An automatic transmission;
4. A vehicle which is capable of a maximum speed of no more than 30 m.p.h.;
5. Complies with all applicable Federal motor vehicle safety standards.

A Moped is not eligible for a Moped sticker if it does not meet the above requirements (see Page 28, MOPEDS).

# MASSACHUSETTS COMMERCIAL DRIVERS LICENSE CLASSIFICATION

WITH THIS CLASS LICENSE	YOU MAY DRIVE	RELATED ENDORSEMENTS
A	<p>Any combination of vehicles with GCWR of 26,001 or more pounds provided the GVWR of the vehicle(s) being towed is in excess of 10,000 pounds. (Holders of a Class A License may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Classes B and C.)</p> <p>Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> 	Double/Triple Trailers Tank Vehicles Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT HAZMAT Passenger Transport Vehicles
B	<p>Any single vehicle with a GVWR of 26,001 or more pounds, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR. (Holders of a Class B License may, with any appropriate endorsements, operate all vehicles within Classes B and C.)</p> <p>Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> 	Tank Vehicles Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT HAZMAT Passenger Transport Vehicles
C	<p>Any single vehicle that is less than 26,001 pounds GVWR, or any such vehicle towing a vehicle not in excess of 10,000 pounds GVWR, that is placarded for hazardous materials or designed to transport 16 or more persons, including the operator.</p> <p>Examples include, but are not limited to:</p> 	Tank Vehicles Tank Vehicles with HAZMAT HAZMAT Passenger Transport Vehicles

*(Continued on next page)*

WITH THIS CLASS LICENSE	YOU MAY DRIVE	RELATED ENDORSEMENTS
D	Any motor vehicle or combination, except a semitrailer unit, truck trailer combination, tractor, truck having a registered gross weight in excess of 26,000 pounds, bus, school bus. 	
M	"Motorcycle," any motor vehicle having a seat or saddle for the use of the rider and designed to travel on not more than three wheels in contact with the ground, including any bicycle with a motor or driving wheel attached. 	

The vehicle in which you will take the road test must meet the written description for that class. If you wish to be licensed to drive a vehicle with air brakes, the vehicle in which you will be tested must be equipped with air brakes. The above vehicle silhouettes typify, but do not fully cover, the types of vehicles falling within each class. To operate a school bus, drivers are required to obtain a specific certification, in addition to the appropriate class and endorsement of CDL license.

**This Drivers' License Manual is designed to prepare you for your examination when applying for a Class D operator's license, motorcycle license or Learner's Permit.**

**For information pertaining to Class A, B, C License or School Bus operator's certificate, please refer to the Commercial Drivers' License Manual and for information pertaining to the School Pupil Transport operator's certificate, refer to the School Pupil Transport Vehicles Manual.**

# **HOW TO OBTAIN A LEARNER'S PERMIT**

## **Learner's Permit Application Requirements**

Any person who is at least 16 years of age, except persons who have had their license taken away by the Registrar or persons whose right to operate has been taken away by the Registrar, may apply for a Learner's Permit at any Registry Office. (See inside back page for location.)

Upon completion of the Learner's Permit application, you must submit it in person to the Registry of Motor Vehicles office. When your application has been approved and the required fee of \$15.00 paid, you will be given the time of your examination for the same day. Examinations are offered on a walk-in basis. No appointment for a future date will be scheduled. Examinations are not held on Saturdays.

- 1. Your application must be given to the Examiner at the time of your examination.**
- 2. Identifying Documents** – At the time of examination, all applicants must show proof of age by presenting a birth certificate, baptismal record, school certification, passport, or other approved official document certifying date of birth of applicant. Except for an applicant who is under 18 years of age and has an appropriate sponsor, must also show proof of age at the time of examination, each applicant must present at least three documents sufficient to confirm the **applicant's date of birth, Massachusetts residence, and evidence of the applicant's signature.**

For a complete list of acceptable forms of identification, see "Duplicate Licenses," page 35. **PHOTOCOPIES ARE NOT ACCEPTED.**

- 3. Driver License Number** – Driver License numbers are public records. A random state-assigned license number will be issued unless you request otherwise. You must, however, submit your social security number, which must be retained on Registry records for interstate driver license identification purposes. Your social security number may be verified by the Social Security Administration.

- 4. National Driver Register** – Applicants must be cleared through a National Driver Register (NDR) check to determine your driver's record in the other 49 states.

**5. Parental Consent**

- a.** All applicants for Learner's Permits and Driver's Licenses who are under the age of 18 must obtain written consent from their parent, guardian, child guardian division or boarding school headmaster. Written consent may be given by signing the back of the Learner's Permit application. If the person signing the application **IS NOT** a parent, proper documentation must be shown at the time of the learner's permit to prove that the person signing is qualified as parent substitute or sponsor.
- b.** In order for the consent of a person other than a parent or guardian to be accepted, the following four requirements must be met:
  - 1.** Person signing must be at least 21 years of age;
  - 2.** Parents or guardian do not have custody;
  - 3.** Individual must have charge of disciplining the minor; and
  - 4.** Individual should be living with the minor.

- c.** A social worker of a child under the Child Guardian Division of the Department of Public Welfare or headmaster of a boarding school, provided applicant is a full-time boarding student, may sign consent in the event parents or guardians do not have custody.

**d. Marriage Exception**

An applicant under the age of 18 who produces a valid marriage certificate is not required to obtain parental consent. However, the applicant must still produce proof of age at the time of examination.

**6. Physical or Mental Conditions; License Restrictions**

Applicants with a mental or physical condition which might interfere with the proper operation of a motor vehicle must have

their application approved in accordance with the requirements of the Medical Affairs Branch of the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Special equipment might be required on the motor vehicle to compensate for certain conditions. Information on special requirements will be provided by the Medical Affairs Branch, (617) 351-9222.

## **7. Deaf and Hearing Impaired Applicants**

Applicants with impaired hearing and learning disabilities can request a simplified English examination formulated in cooperation with the Learning Center for the Deaf. This examination is available from the Driver Licensing Section upon request of branch office supervisors.

An applicant who has a hearing impairment so severe that he/she has not developed basic skills in the English language may, upon submitting written confirmation of applicants condition from a licensed physician or a staff member of the Massachusetts Office of Deafness, be accompanied by an interpreter and take an oral examination with the assistance of the interpreter. The interpreter may be a friend or relative and must co-sign the applicant's application to verify his or her participation in the examination process.

## **8. Oral Examinations**

When unusual circumstances or conditions existing regarding an applicant, such as dyslexia, extremely poor reading skills or severe learning disabilities, the office supervisor or his or her delegated representative is authorized to waive the required written examination and arrange for an oral examination of the applicant. The Registry recommends that the branch office be advised of such special circumstances when the application is filed so that an appointment can be made for an oral examination.

## **9. Foreign Language Examinations**

Applicants who are unable to take a Learner's Permit examination in English may request that a foreign language examination be administered.

## **Learner's Permit Examination Procedures**

- 1.** The Learner's Permit examination includes an eye screening, a test for field of vision and basic colors. Applicants must inform the Examiner if they are wearing contact lenses and answer Question #14 by indicating their use. Applicants using eyeglasses or contact lenses during the examination will be required to wear corrective lenses when driving.
- 2.** The applicant must pass a written test on the Motor Vehicle Laws and other information contained in this booklet. In addition, the examination for a Motorcycle Learner's Permit will include questions relating specifically to the safe operation of motorcycles, contained in this booklet under the heading "Information Relating To Motorcycles." The examination will consist of twenty (20) questions. Fourteen (14) questions must be answered correctly to qualify for a Learner's Permit.
- 3.** Upon obtaining a Learner's Permit, the applicant should carefully read the text on the front of the permit which explains the rights and limitations imposed upon the permit holder.
- 4.** Only the applicant is allowed in the Examination Area during an exam. No children or pets will be allowed in this area.

## **Learner's Permit Appointment Fee Will Not Be Refunded:**

- 1.** If you fail the test.
- 2.** If you are not prepared for the test.
- \*3.** If you are caught cheating.

\*Anyone caught cheating shall receive a failing score. A person shall be considered to be cheating if the Registrar has a reasonable basis to believe that the test applicant had unauthorized access to any test question prior to the administration of the test or had unauthorized access to any answer to the test question or engaged in any unauthorized verbal or non-verbal communication during the administration of the test.

## **LIMITATIONS ON LEARNER'S PERMITS (Except Motorcycles)**

When driving, a person with a Learner's Permit must:

- 1.** Carry the Learner's Permit on his/her person or in the vehicle;
- 2.** Be accompanied by a licensed operator who:
  - a.** Is duly licensed by his/her home state;
  - b.** Holds a driver's license which is valid for the class of vehicle being driven;
  - c.** Has had at least one year of driving experience;
  - d.** Occupies a seat beside the driver;
  - e.** Is at least 18 years of age.
- 3.** A person less than eighteen years old, driving on a Learner's Permit, may not drive between the hours of 1:00 A.M. and 5:00 A.M. **unless:**
  - a.** Accompanied by a parent or legal guardian who is duly licensed in his/her home state;
  - b.** The parent or guardian has at least one year of driving experience;
  - c.** The parent or guardian has at least one year of driving experience.
- 4.** May only operate out of state, if it is not in violation of that state's law.

## **HOW TO OBTAIN A CLASS D DRIVER'S LICENSE**

### **Driver's License Application Requirements**

Any person who has reached the age of seventeen (17) may apply for a driver's license. A license may be obtained by a person who is sixteen and one-half (16-1/2) years of age provided the applicant has successfully completed a certified Driver Education course.

A license application may be obtained at any Registry location and must accompany the applicant on the day of exam. Carefully answer each question on the license application. If you answer "yes" to questions 14 or 15 (medical conditions), the application must be approved by a Registry Branch Manager or an authorized person of the R.M.V. prior to the road exam.

For your convenience Road Tests are scheduled by phone only.

### **FOR A ROAD TEST APPOINTMENT CALL**

In the 508 and 413 area codes: 1-800-858-3926

In the 617 area code: 351-4500

HOURS: 9:00 A.M. to 7:00 P.M. (Monday-Friday)

You must be on time. Road tests are closely scheduled. You will not be examined if you are late for an appointment. Road tests are not held on Saturdays.

An applicant who has passed the road test will be required to pay a \$20.00 application fee. Payment is to be made at the time the driver's license is issued. The applicant is also responsible for a road test application fee for each failure, rejection, no show or late arrival.

### **Driver's Education Certification**

Applicants who are at least sixteen and one-half (16-1/2) years of age but under seventeen (17) years of age, at the time of the road test appointment, must have a Driver's Education Certificate in your name issued by the Registrar and bearing the validating signature stamp of the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. **No license examination will be given unless you give the application and the Learner's Permit to the examiner at the time of the examination.** You must have parental consent on the back of the application if you are under 18 years of age.

In some cases, a driver education course taken outside the Commonwealth will be honored in Massachusetts. In such cases, the applicant must mail a photo copy of the out-of-state certificate to the Supervisor of Driver Education of the Registry of Motor Vehicles, 1135 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02120-2103.

# JUNIOR OPERATOR'S LICENSE - DRIVING RESTRICTIONS

Licensed Massachusetts drivers between the ages of 16-1/2 and 18 years of age may not operate a motor vehicle between the hours of 1:00 A.M. and 4:00 A.M. unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.

**QUALIFIED PERSONS WILL RECEIVE A LICENSE SIMILAR  
TO THE SAMPLES BELOW.**



## **ROAD TEST REQUIREMENTS**

- 1. You must present the completed application to the Examiner.**
- 2. If you are between the age of 16-1/2 and 17 years, you must have a Driver Education Certificate issued by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.**
- 3. You must supply a Class D vehicle for the road test that has adequate seating accommodations next to the operator for the examiner and a rear seat for the sponsor. Any vehicle in which an examiner cannot make an emergency stop using the foot and/or emergency brake, cannot be used for the road test i.e., vehicle with center console that does not have an emergency brake as part of the console. The Examiner has the right to determine if your vehicle is in good working order before the road test begins.**
- 4. If the vehicle used is rented, you must have the rental agreement and written permission on the rental company's letterhead authorizing use of the vehicle for a road test.**
- 5. You must be accompanied by a sponsor who:**
  - a. Is at least eighteen (18) years of age;**
  - b. Has had at least one (1) year of driving experience;**
  - c. Has in possession a valid license issued by his/her home state.**
- 6. You must present a valid Learner's Permit of the proper type or class in order to receive the road test.**
- 7. Your sponsor must present his/her license to the Examiner.**
- 8. You must present a valid registration certificate for the vehicle used for the road test.**
- 9. Only you, the sponsor, the Examiner and, if authorized, an interpreter are allowed in the vehicle during the exam.** No children or pets are permitted in the vehicle during the road test. Conversation between the applicant and sponsor is prohibited unless authorized by the examiner. For motorcycle road tests, the Examiner will observe from a safe area the applicant's ability to operate the motorcycle.

Vehicles that are registered out-of-state and are used for a road test must:

- a. Have the owner's consent to use the vehicle for the road test.
- b. Maintain insurance coverage equal to Massachusetts minimum limits:  
    \$20,000 – \$40,000 – Bodily Injury  
    \$5,000 – Property Damage
- c. Carry proof of insurance coverage in the form of the policy or an insurance certificate specifying limits of coverage.
- d. Present such proof of insurance coverage upon request to the Registry Examiner before the road test begins.

## **The Road Test Appointment Fee Will Not Be Refunded:**

1. If you fail the test.
2. If you are not prepared for the test.
3. If you are refused a road test because the vehicle fails to pass the Examiner's inspection.
4. If you fail to appear or are late for the test.
5. If you cancel or re-schedule your appointment with less than a 24 hour notice of your scheduled appointment time.
6. If the vehicle does not meet road test requirements (see page 12).

## **Cancellation of Driving Tests**

Any road test scheduled within a particular community shall be cancelled for weather reasons **AUTOMATICALLY** for the entire day whenever, the public school system for that community cancels school. Road tests may also be cancelled by the examiner due to weather conditions. If you believe your road exam may have been cancelled, please call the Registry's Phone Center at (617) 351-4500. If you are calling from the 508/413 area code, call 1-800-858-3926. Road tests shall also be cancelled automatically if the Governor

declares a state of emergency. If the Governor's declaration of emergency is for a particular region only, only road tests in that region shall be cancelled. In such cases, a new appointment may be scheduled without a fee.

**REMEMBER!** On those days when driving tests are being conducted, **the Applicant must appear on time** or will be refused a driving test. The examination fee will be forfeited, (see page 13) and the applicant will be required to schedule another road test appointment.

## Driving Test Procedures

Driving tests are conducted only by an Examiner of the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Prior to the road test, the Examiner will inspect the motor vehicle used for the road test to be sure that it is properly registered, that all equipment is in good working order, and that the motor vehicle provides a safe, adequate, and clean seat for the Examiner located next to the operator. If the vehicle is registered in Massachusetts, it must bear a valid inspection sticker.

After the vehicle is inspected and approved by the Examiner, the driving test will begin. The only persons allowed in the motor vehicle are the applicant behind the wheel and the Examiner seated next to him or her; the sponsor must be seated in the rear seat of the vehicle.

It is the Examiner's duty to give clear instructions, and the applicant need not fear that the Examiner will instruct the applicant to do anything contrary to the law, or that the Examiner's directions may lead to an unreasonable driving situation which may be cause for failure. The Examiner's goal is to observe your driving performance. You may be required to demonstrate your ability to perform the following:

**HAND SIGNALS** The Examiner may require you to use hand signals throughout the driving test to demonstrate your application of their use.



LEFT TURN



RIGHT TURN



SLOW or STOP

**START ENGINE** The Examiner will observe how you start the engine and how you prepare to begin to drive by using the proper gear, releasing the hand brake, moving into the roadway when it is clear and safe and administering the proper hand signals.

**START AND STOP VEHICLE** The Examiner will note the steadiness of your starts and your reaction time before applying your brake to stop your vehicle.

**PARK PARALLEL TO THE CURB** The Examiner will note whether you first check traffic by looking in the rear view mirror and over your shoulder and indicate by hand signal your intention to park. The Examiner will note the position of your car before backing up and whether you maneuver into the space. The Examiner will also note how closely you parked to the curb and whether you correctly positioned the front wheels.

This portion of the test is important, as it gives the Examiner some idea of your ability to handle a car, and your judgement of distances.

**BACKING UP APPROXIMATELY 50 FEET** Backing up is more difficult for the beginner than driving forward, partly because the field of vision is obstructed by the car itself. It is best to turn to your right so you can see through the rear glass. The rear view mirror alone should never be used for backing up a car. Practice is necessary to keep control of the vehicle. Back slowly into the proper lane of traffic with a minimum of movement. Backing up calls for great caution, patience and constant observation.

**MAKE LEFT AND RIGHT TURNS** The Examiner will note whether you are in the correct lane for making the turn and have given the proper turn signal at the right time. Giving signals approximately 100 feet before the turn is considered safe. The Examiner will also note if you turn at the proper speed and how well you handle the car during and after the turn.

**START AND STOP THE VEHICLE ON A HILL** The Examiner will note how you back up or pull to a curb or into a parking space, while facing up or downhill, and how you position the front wheels. The Examiner will also note if the emergency brake is set and if you signal and check the traffic before pulling away from a parking space.

**TURN AROUND ON A HILL** The Examiner will note how you turn around on a hill without resting the wheels against the curb or sidewalk.

**ENTER AND LEAVE INTERSECTIONS** The Examiner will note your approach speed, observance of other cars, whether you make a full stop at stop signs, your lane position, and whether you give pedestrians the full right-of-way.

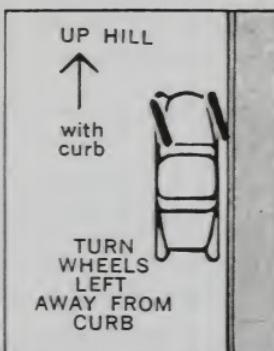
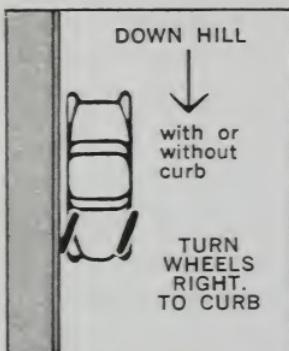
**RECOGNIZE AND OBEY TRAFFIC SIGNS, LIGHTS, AND SIGNALS** The Examiner will pay close attention to your response to any traffic sign, light, signal or markings.

**USE OF GOOD DRIVING RULES** In addition to the performance of the basic procedures listed, the Examiner will note the following points:

1. Your driving posture. Both hands should be properly positioned on the wheel at all times.
2. Whether you drive in the proper traffic lane and if you look carefully and signal properly before changing lanes.
3. Whether you maintain enough distance between your vehicle and the one ahead of you.
4. Whether you drive at a safe speed at all times to comply with speed limits and varying traffic conditions.
5. Your general observance, particularly of the action of others.
6. If you correctly yield the right-of-way.

IN ADDITION TO THESE BASIC DRIVING PROCEDURES,  
YOU MIGHT BE REQUIRED TO PERFORM OTHER DRIVING  
TASKS THAT THE EXAMINER DEEMS NECESSARY.

### PARKING ON HILLS:



### Reasons For Failing The Road Test Generally Are:

1. You are at fault in an accident with another motor vehicle, pedestrian, or object.
2. You are driving in such a manner that may have caused an accident, or is considered dangerous by the Examiner.
3. You violated a motor vehicle law, rule or regulation.
4. You demonstrate a lack of experience for safe operation.
5. You refuse to follow the Examiner's instructions, or drive contrary to such instructions.

# MOTORCYCLES

**NOTE:** A motorcycle includes motor bikes and motor scooters. A moped is not a motorcycle. Please see page 28 for information on mopeds.

## **Motorcycle Learner's Permit**

1. To apply for a motorcycle Learner's Permit, one must obtain the proper application from the Registry. Walk-in testing is now available, no appointment is necessary. Applicants must be at least 16 years old.
2. The Learner's Permit must be signed by the applicant.
3. **WHILE OPERATING ON PUBLIC STREETS OR HIGHWAYS**, a person with a Motorcycle Learner's Permit must adhere to the following limitations:
  - a. Must **NOT** carry passenger(s);
  - b. Shall operate **ONLY** during the hours of daylight — (between sunrise and sunset);
  - c. May operate in another state, if it is not in violation of that state's law;
  - d. Is **NOT** required to be accompanied by a Licensed Operator;
  - e. Must wear DOT standard helmet (see page 26);
  - f. Must wear eyeglasses, goggles, or a protective faceshield unless the motorcycle is equipped with a windshield or screen;
  - g. Must carry a valid Learner's Permit on his/her person or on the motorcycle.

## **Examination For Motorcycle Learner's Permit Is Based On:**

1. Basic motorcycle information contained in Part I of this manual. (Read also, "How to Obtain Learner's Permit" in Part I);
2. Information contained in Part II of this manual.

## **Expiration Of A Motorcycle Learner's Permit:**

1. A motorcycle Learner's Permit expires twelve (12) months from date of issue.
2. An applicant may not take more than six (6) road tests during a twelve (12) month period.
3. An applicant that fails two (2) road tests shall be required to successfully complete a beginner rider course offered by an approved rider training school prior to scheduling a subsequent road test (see page 27).
4. A Learner's Permit must be surrendered to the Examiner upon passing the Road Test.

## **Motorcycle License — Class "M"**

If an applicant for a motorcycle license is road-tested on a three-wheel motorcycle, his/her license will be limited to a three-wheel motorcycle.

An applicant must be at least 17 years old to obtain a motorcycle license. However, if you have a Driver-Education Certificate issued by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles, you may apply for a motorcycle license when you are 16-1/2 years of age.

A person who has an out-of-state driver license that does not allow motorcycle operation must obtain a Motorcycle Learner's Permit in order to operate a motorcycle in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

An applicant that has successfully completed a Beginner Motorcycle Rider Education Course sponsored by the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau is exempt from the road test **ONLY** for obtaining a motorcycle endorsement on his/her Massachusetts Driver's License or for obtaining a motorcycle license. The applicant must present the "Certificate of Beginner Motorcycle Rider Education Training" to the Registry of Motor Vehicles within 90 days of the class graduation date.

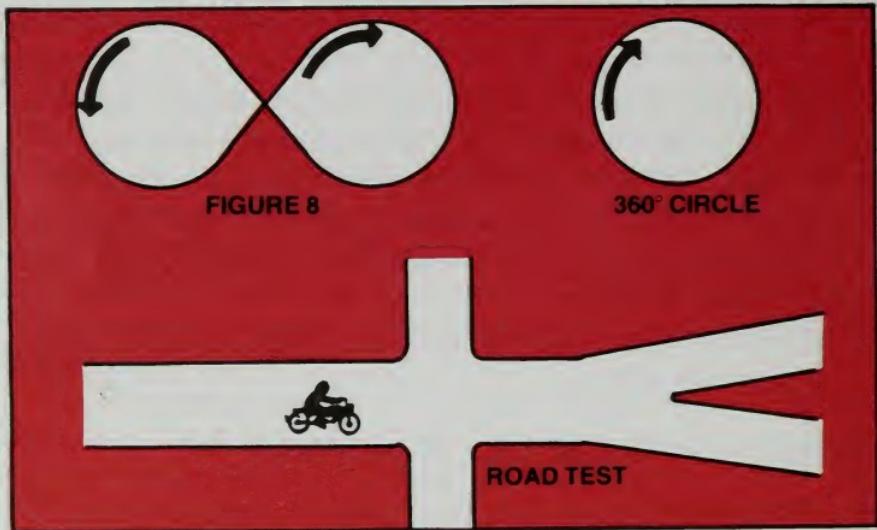
## **How To Obtain A Class "M" License**

- 1.** Apply for a Motorcycle Learner's Permit.
- 2.** Pass a Motorcycle written test.
- 3.** Schedule a Motorcycle road test.
- 4.** Pass a Motorcycle road test.
  - a.** **You must be on time for your examination.** Examinations are closely scheduled. Therefore, you will not be examined if you are late.
  - b.** You must present the approved license application to the Examiner.
  - c.** You must present a valid Motorcycle Learner's Permit.
  - d.** You must present the Registration Certificate issued to the motorcycle used for the Road Test.
  - e.** You must present a valid Inspection Certificate issued to the motorcycle used for the Road Test.
  - f.** You must wear a DOT standard helmet. Stickers indicating the helmet meets the DOT standard can be found applied to both the inside and outside of the helmet (see page 26).
  - g.** You must wear eyeglasses, goggles, or a protective faceshield unless the motorcycle is equipped with a windshield or screen.
- 5.** Current license will then be amended to show authority to operate a motorcycle.

## **Motorcycle Riding Test Procedures**

- 1.** The pre-road test examination requires the applicant to have full knowledge of all equipment and controls of the motorcycle. The primary controls are the throttle, clutch lever, gear shift lever, front brake lever, and rear brake pedal. The secondary controls include fuel-supply valve, ignition switch, choke, engine cut-off switch, electric starter, headlight beam, turn signals, horn, speedometer, odometer, tachometer, indicator lights (especially the neutral indicator light), and side stand.

2. Your road test will consist of: figure eights; 360 degree circles left and right without your feet touching the road; normal starts and stops; driving in traffic; crossing intersections; left and right turns; riding up and down hills; and any other operation which the Examiner may feel necessary or conditions warrant.
3. During the examination you will be judged on how you apply the "Rules of the Road." Your judgement, control, coordination, and reaction to any emergency will be considered. Courtesy and consideration to pedestrians and other drivers is also noted by the Examiner.
4. Hand signals must be used and a DOT standard helmet must be worn (see page 26).
5. You must wear eyeglasses, goggles, or a protective faceshield unless the motorcycle is equipped with a windshield or screen.



## Safe Motorcycle Riding Practices

**CONTROLS:** You must be thoroughly familiar with the location of all controls so that you do not have to look for them. **KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD!**

**BRAKING:** Motorcycles must have a front and a rear brake and you should use both of them simultaneously to slow or stop. The front brake is the more effective of the two, normally providing about three-quarters of the motorcycle's total stopping power. It is not dangerous to use the front brake — but it is important to understand and use proper braking technique to be able to stop effectively. Here are some things to remember about braking:

1. Apply both brakes simultaneously. Squeeze the front brake lever while you apply steady pressure to the rear brake pedal. Avoid sudden or abrupt application of either control.
2. Both brakes should also be used when braking in a curve. Gradually apply more pressure as the motorcycle slows. Straightening the handlebars as you come to a stop for better balance.
3. In slippery or wet conditions, anticipate stops earlier and use gentler, more gradual pressure on the brake controls.

**HAND POSITION:** Ride with your hands on the handgrips in a comfortable position so you can operate all of the controls. Sit far enough forward to be able to rotate the handlebars fully to either side.

1. Clutch: Controlled by left hand lever, you should be able to comfortably squeeze the lever and gradually ease it out without slipping.
2. Brake (front): Controlled by right hand lever. Your grip should allow you to squeeze the lever firmly without grabbing or slipping.
3. Throttle: Controlled by twisting the right handgrip. Get the “feel” of the throttle before operating. Keep a “wrist down” position to allow smooth, unrestricted movement of the throttle. Increase power by turning the control toward you. Decrease engine power by turning it away from you. The throttle should freely spring back to an idle position if released.

**SHIFTING:** Shifting is usually controlled by the left foot. Smooth, rapid shifting is essential to safe operation:

1. Adjust the gear shift lever to a position under the ball of the foot so that there is sufficient room above and below the lever to shift in either direction without removing your foot from the peg.
2. Downshift while coming to a stop without releasing the clutch between shifts. There is no need to put the motorcycle in neutral when stopped as long as the clutch remains disengaged (squeezed).
3. Smooth, rapid shifting is most desirable using coordinated throttle and clutch operation. Avoid stomping on the lever. Downshift for greater power and acceleration if the engine speed is too low.

**CORNERING:** Slow **before** entering a corner and accelerate gradually throughout the turn. Leaning is important because it helps to overcome the pull of centrifugal force and maintain your balance while turning. Lean the motorcycle by pressing on the handgrip in the direction you want to go. Always try to look as far through a curve as possible — toward the curve's exit.

**THINK AHEAD:** Assume that automobile drivers do not see you. The motorcycle operator has an excellent view of the surrounding roadway, but the operators of cars and trucks have many blind spots. Wear a brightly-colored helmet and clothing and use your headlight at all times to help others see you. Observing road conditions well ahead will also help you to avoid emergency situations.

**INTERSECTIONS:** Blind entry is the cause of most motorcycle accidents at intersections. Do not enter or exit from an alley or driveway until you are sure that no other vehicle or pedestrian is approaching. Be wary of oncoming vehicles making a left turn in your path.

**ROAD SURFACES:** Motorcycles are especially vulnerable to poor road conditions. The operator should have a deep respect for wet, slippery or sandy roadways. Railroad tracks and steel-deck bridge gratings present unique challenges to the motorcycle rider. The right-hand lane of the wider highways usually has a slippery oil slick and is rougher than other lanes because of greater vehicle use. The center of each lane may also accumulate oil from automobiles and trucks, especially at intersections and toll booths.

**HAND SIGNALS:** Hand signals are required by law if electrical signals are not used. Use caution when changing lanes and moving in traffic and look all around you. Avoid startling the operators of other vehicles when you pass.

**EXPRESSWAY USE:** Unless your motorcycle can travel safely at minimum posted speed limits, avoid using expressways. Pay particular attention when entering or leaving expressways. If you cannot stay with the flow of traffic, exit the expressway as soon as possible and choose an alternate route.

**PASSENGERS:** In order to carry a passenger, a licensed operator must be proficient at solo operation. Be aware that carrying a passenger changes the handling characteristics of a motorcycle. Practice carrying a passenger in a controlled area like an isolated parking lot before attempting to ride double on the street for the first time. The passenger should have the same riding gear and eye protection as the operator and must have a DOT standard helmet (see page 26). Passengers should sit behind the operator and no passenger shall ride sidesaddle. Remember that the motorcycle Learner's Permit **FORBIDS** operation while riding double. Further, to be able to carry a passenger, a motorcycle must be equipped with separate footrest, handgrips, and a securely fastened seat for the passenger, or a sidecar designed to carry a passenger.

**PARKING:** Park your motorcycle so it can be seen by other operators. Avoid parking too close to the rear or right side of cars and trucks. Make certain that the side or centerstand is planted firmly on solid ground and try to avoid parking "nose down" against a curb! Leave your motorcycle in gear when parked to help prevent it from rolling.

**AFTER DARK:** Drive at reduced speeds. Be sure that all of your lights are working and that your eye protection is clear, clean, and free of scratches.

**GOOD RIDING HABITS:** Motorcyclists must follow the basic driving rules. In addition, motorcyclists must understand that they are more vulnerable than other drivers and take further precautions:

1. Practice your basic and emergency riding skills. Beginning and experienced riders should regularly practice braking, cornering and swerving skills in a controlled area or by taking a rider training course.
2. Allow greater following distances to avoid the need for sudden stops and to provide an additional escape route.
3. Keep your distance when passing to help other vehicle operators see you. Signal, check your mirror, and turn your head briefly to check if a lane is clear before pulling into it.
4. Do not travel between two lanes of traffic. You may be cited for a moving violation if you do not stay within the marked lanes.
5. The operators of motorcycles shall ride no more than two abreast, and shall ride single file when passing.
6. Warm up your engine before entering traffic to avoid stalling your motorcycle.
7. Use both brakes simultaneously when stopping.
8. Avoid making sharp turns or abrupt braking maneuvers, and be especially cautious on slippery surfaces. Use reduced speeds on slippery roads caused by ice, snow, rain, fog, sand, mud, etc.
9. Fatigue dulls the senses and slows reaction time. Efficiency is diminished on long rides. Take a break every few hours to stay alert.
10. Know your limits — the limits of your motorcycle, the environment, and your skills. Ride within them!

## MOTORCYCLE EQUIPMENT

**PRE-RIDE CHECK:** Prior to operating any motorcycle, carefully review its owner's manual. Store the manual on the motorcycle. Before each ride, check to make certain the major components are properly functioning: lights, tires and wheels, fuel and oil, cables and suspension.

**HANDLEBARS:** Motorcycle handlebars must not be more than 15 inches in height above the highest part of the seat when the operator is sitting on it.

**MUFFLER:** A motorcycle muffler must effectively silence excessive noise at all times. It is illegal to use a cutout or bypass on the exhaust system.

**REAR BRAKE:** The rear brake pedal is beneath the normal riding position of the right foot. Your instep should rest comfortably on the peg. The pedal is usually adjustable for the correct position.

**FRONT BRAKE:** The front brake is controlled by the right hand lever. Either brake control should activate the brake light.

**INSPECTION:** All motorcycles must be inspected annually. Motorcycle safety inspections may only be performed by Class M licensed inspection stations. The inspection decal must be properly affixed to the registration plate.

**RIDING GEAR:** Motorcyclists should dress for comfort and protection. Riding gear provides protection from the environment and can reduce injury in case of an accident.

1. Long sleeves and full trousers will help maintain body heat and moisture, protect against sunburn, and reduce skin abrasion in case of an accident. Heavier clothing provides more protection if it is properly fitted. Leather and modern abrasion-resistant synthetic materials provide the best protection.
2. Shoes should be worn rather than sneakers or sandals for better footing and protection against hot and moving parts. Boots provide the best protection and offer additional ankle support.
3. State law requires motorcyclists and their passengers to wear helmets that comply with specifications issued by the Registrar and that meet the current U.S. Department of Transportation's (DOT) Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 218. Stickers indicating the helmet meets the DOT standard can be found applied to both the inside and outside of the helmet. DOT standard helmets provide comfort and protection from the elements, and they can prevent or reduce head injury in case of a crash. A free brochure that helps identify helmets that do not meet the DOT standard is available from the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau by calling (617) 727-5073.

4. Eyeglasses, goggles, or a protective faceshield must be worn unless the motorcycle is equipped with a windshield or screen. Ideally, eye protection should always be used by both the operator and passenger.
5. Full-fingered gloves protect your hands and provide a better grip for operating the hand controls.

**LIGHTS:** Lights must be used during the period between 1/2 hour after sunset to 1/2 hour before sunrise as well as any period when visibility is poor. Daytime headlight use is recommended as a way to help other operators to see you.

1. Headlights: the law requires at least one approved white light facing forward, which will make clearly visible a person or object 115 feet away, for motorcycles manufactured prior to 1986. Headlights on motorcycles manufactured in 1986 or later must have an approved white light which will make clearly visible a person or object 350 feet away. A sidecar when attached to a motorcycle must also have a white light facing forward.
2. Taillights: The law requires a rear red taillight, a stop light, and a white light to illuminate the number plate. Check that either brake control will illuminate the stop light.
3. Mirrors: Left mirror is required by law, but use both mirrors constantly. Always assume that the operator of a vehicle approaching from behind does not see you. Flash your brake light when stopped to get the operator's attention.

## Minimize the Risk, Maximize the Fun!

### Take a Rider Education Course.

The Massachusetts Motorcycle Rider Education Program offers Motorcycle Safety Foundation-approved beginner and experienced courses.

Graduates are eligible for a limited 10% motorcycle insurance discount.

Call 24 hours a day for more information:

**(617) 727-5073**



Sponsored by the  
Governor's Highway Safety Bureau  
William F. Weld, Governor

## **MOPEDS**

According to Massachusetts law, a Moped comes within the definition of a "motorized bicycle." In order to be classified as a "Moped" it must comply with the following:

- 1.** A cylinder capacity of no more than fifty cubic centimeters;
- 2.** An automatic transmission;
- 3.** A vehicle which is capable of a maximum speed of no more than 30 m.p.h.;
- 4.** Complies with all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.

A Moped sticker, issued by the Registry of Motor Vehicles, must be affixed to the Moped. This sticker will not be issued unless the vehicle meets the above requirements.

Moped operators are subject to the traffic laws and rules and regulations of the Commonwealth.

Mopeds shall have the right to use all public ways in the Commonwealth, **except** limited access or express state highways where signs prohibiting bicycles have been posted.

Mopeds may use bicycle lanes next to various ways but are excluded from off street recreational paths.

Moped operators must signal their intention to stop or turn by the use of either hand.

Moped operators may keep to the right when passing a motor vehicle which is in the travel lane of the way.

### **Mopeds Shall Not Be Operated:**

- 1.** By any person under 16 years of age.
- 2.** By any person who does not possess a valid driver's license or learner's permit.
- 3.** At a speed greater than 25 m.p.h.
- 4.** Without a DOT standard helmet (see page 26). The law requires that a DOT standard helmet, must be worn by the operator and the passenger at all times during the operation of the vehicle.

# **SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF A DRIVER'S LICENSE/PERMIT OR THE RIGHT TO OPERATE A MOTOR VEHICLE**

Driving on the ways of the Commonwealth is not a right, but a privilege that may be suspended or revoked by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

**MANDATORY SUSPENSIONS:** The law requires that you lose your privilege to drive in certain instances, which are basically as follows:

1. Suspensions that occur as a result of a **particular** conviction that by statute calls for a period of suspension/revocation. **Examples** of these are drunk driving, drug possession or distribution, operating uninsured motor vehicles, operating after suspension, leaving the scene of an accident, and operating to endanger.
2. Suspensions that occur as a result of a series of convictions or incidents that indicate poor driving habits. They are as follows:
  - A. **Three Speeding Convictions:** Three speeding convictions within one year will result in a thirty day suspension.
  - B. **Five Surchargeable Events:** A total of five surchargeable events (any combination of moving violations and surchargeable accidents) within three years will require the operator to enter and complete a Driver Retraining Program approved by the Registry. Failure to complete the course will result in a suspension until the course is completed.
  - C. **Seven Surchargeable Events:** A total of seven surchargeable events (any combination of moving violations and surchargeable accidents) within three years will result in a 60 day suspension, as well as a requirement that the operator enter and complete a Driver Retraining Program approved by the Registry before being reinstated.
  - D. **Habitual Traffic Offender:** A total of three major moving violations, or any combination of twelve major or minor moving violations, within five years will result in a four year revocation.

**E. Out of State Suspensions:** Your license or right to operate a motor vehicle will be suspended in Massachusetts by law should you be under suspension or revocation in any other state. The **Registrar**, by law, is required to treat a motor vehicle violation committed in another state as if it happened on our roadways, and apply the same penalty, regardless of whether or not that state took any action on your driving privileges.

**DISCRETIONARY SUSPENSIONS:** The Registrar, in his discretion, may suspend/revoke your license, permit or right to operate in the following situations:

**Immediate Threats:** If you commit an offense of such a serious nature that continued operation would constitute an immediate threat to public safety, the Registrar may, in his discretion, suspend your license, permit, or right to operate, immediately.

**Improper Operation:** After a hearing, the Registrar may, in his discretion, suspend your license, permit, or right to operate upon a finding that you improperly operated a motor vehicle.

## **APPEALS**

Any person aggrieved by a ruling or decision of the Registrar may, within ten (10) days thereafter, appeal the ruling or decision to the Board of Appeal.

Address:   Board of Appeal on Motor Vehicle  
                 Liability Policies and Bonds  
                 470 Atlantic Avenue, 6th Floor  
                 Boston, Massachusetts 02114

## **FINES AND PENALTIES FOR VIOLATION OF MOTOR VEHICLE LAWS**

All fines and penalties quoted in this manual are based on 1994 laws and **are subject to change.**

For violation of the following:

Driving faster than **POSTED** speeds.

Driving at a rate of speed that is greater than reasonable and proper.

Driving over 20 m.p.h. within a school zone.

Driving over 30 m.p.h. in a thickly settled district.

Driving over 40 m.p.h. outside of a thickly settled district.

Driving over 50 m.p.h. on a divided highway outside a thickly settled district.

Any person convicted of a violation of any of the above listed speed laws shall be punished by a fine of not less than fifty dollars (\$50.00). Where the conviction is for operating the vehicle at a rate of speed exceeding ten miles per hour over the speed limit for the way upon which the person was operating, **an additional fine of ten dollars (\$10.00) for each mile in excess of the ten miles per hour shall be assessed.**

## **SPECIAL LICENSING RULES FOR MILITARY PERSONNEL**

A member of the armed forces of the United States and spouse may operate a private passenger vehicle in Massachusetts as long as he/she has complied with the requirement of his/her home state and carries a valid license granted by that state on his/her person.

A legal resident of Massachusetts, whether he/she is in service or out of service, must possess a Massachusetts drivers license to operate any vehicle in this state. However, a member of the armed forces of the United States, Massachusetts residents included, returning from duty outside the United States and have in his/her possession a license to operate motor vehicles issued by said armed forces in a foreign country, may operate a motor vehicle for a period not to exceed forty-five (45) days after his/her return.

A Massachusetts licensed operator whose license has expired while serving in the armed forces may operate on his/her expired license for up to 60 days after discharge from the armed forces. However, an individual who has been hospitalized or released from the armed forces because of a disability must contact the Medical Affairs branch of the Registry of Motor Vehicles upon expiration of his/her license.

An operator must have his/her license and evidence of discharge on his/her person. A discharged service member may renew his/her license within sixty days from the date of his/her discharge without an examination.

A military service member whose legal residence is in Massachusetts and who purchases a motor vehicle in another state and registers it therein, may operate it in this Commonwealth on such a registration for a period of thirty days. Thereafter, the vehicle must be registered in Massachusetts. Residents must have Massachusetts insurance coverage.

A vehicle owned by a member of the armed forces who has returned from abroad displaying plates issued by the armed forces of the United States may operate for a period of thirty days after entry into the Commonwealth for the purpose of traveling either to his/her place of residence or to a point of military duty.

## **NEW RESIDENT LICENSE**

Upon becoming a Massachusetts resident and out-of-state or an out-of-country driver must obtain a Massachusetts Operator's License and Registration (number plates). (For Fees see page 80)

All applicants must present **at least three** identifying documents that confirm **date of birth, Massachusetts residency and signature** to be eligible to receive a license.

Applicants applying for a Massachusetts Operator's License that present a license which has not expired beyond one(1) year from any of the other 49 states or a United States Government driver's permit may be issued a license provided:

1. The applicant does not have an apparent physical disability or limitation which might interfere with the proper operation of a motor vehicle;
2. Applicants between 16-1/2 and 17 years of age must present a Driver Education Certificate issued by the Registrar;
3. Applicants must successfully pass an eye screening examination.
4. Applicants are cleared through a National Driver Register (NDR) check to ensure a clean driver's record in the other 49 states.

Applicants whose out-of-state license has expired beyond one year, but not beyond four years, may have the road test waived but must take a written examination.

Applicants transferring a license from New Hampshire, New Jersey, the Provinces of Canada, Mexico, or any of the United States territories must provide a certified driving record. Applicants from these jurisdictions who present a license that has expired beyond one year, but not beyond four years, may have the road test waived but must take a written examination.

Applicants presenting an out-of-country license from any other jurisdiction must take both the written and road test.

A License applicant whose driving privileges are still in effect according to the "Convention on Road Traffic of 1949", (copy of list of countries and agreement are available upon request) does not need a road test sponsor, if at the time of the road exam the applicant presents a valid driver's license from their home country. Any Driver's License not in English must be accompanied by either an International Driver's License, original translation certified by a bilingual Massachusetts notary public, or by a teacher at an accredited college or university, or embassy or consulate.

## **COURTESIES AND PRIVILEGES EXTENDED TO OUT-OF-STATE DRIVERS**

To assure a free and unrestricted flow of vehicles between states, licenses and registrations of bona fide nonresidents are honored in Massachusetts under the following conditions.

### **Out-of-State Licenses**

1. Has complied fully with the law of his/her home state;
2. Is driving a private passenger motor vehicle of a type which he/she is licensed to operate;
3. Has license in his/her possession or in the vehicle in easily accessible place;
4. Operates within the reciprocity determination made by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. His/her home state grants similar privileges to Massachusetts residents; and
5. Privileges are also extended to a licensed driver of any commercial motor vehicle who is in compliance with the Commercial Driver's License regulations.

## **Out-of-State Registrations**

Any bona fide legal non-resident duly registered in his/her home state may operate an out-of-state motor vehicle in this Commonwealth without a Massachusetts registration, subject to the determinations made by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles. However, if the non-resident drives in Massachusetts for more than a total of 30 days in any one year; or the owner acquires a regular place of abode within the Commonwealth or employment within the Commonwealth, he/she must carry proof of insurance in the form of the policy or an insurance certificate specifying coverage at least equal to Massachusetts minimum insurance limitations:

\$20,000 – \$40,000 – Bodily Injury

\$5,000 – Property Damage

The non-resident should know about the license and registration privileges extended to his/her home state as determined by the Registrar of Motor Vehicles.

## **DUPLICATE LICENSES**

An applicant for a duplicate license must present **at least three** identifying documents that confirm **date of birth, Massachusetts residency** and **signature** to be eligible to receive a duplicate license. **However**, in lieu of documents identifying applicants, other than proof of date of birth, an applicant may be identified by a responsible Massachusetts licensed adult who is at least 25 years of age (Photo Copies are not accepted).

The following documents may be used to satisfy the requirements:

1. Valid Passport with picture and signature
2. Home mortgage papers, lease or loan papers
3. Life insurance papers
4. Discharge papers (DD-214) with date of birth and signature
5. Massachusetts firearms permit with photo, signature & date of birth
6. Any legal documents with applicant's signature

- 7.** Immigration certificate with signature and date of birth
- 8.** School yearbook with photo
- 9.** Military I.D. with photo, signature and date of birth
- 10.** Military dependent's ID with photo, signature & date of birth
- 11.** U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Mariner card with photo, signature & date of birth
- 12.** W-2 yearly income tax form with name and signature
- 13.** Bank passbook
- 14.** Expired Massachusetts license or a license from another state with photo, signature and date of birth (one issued by U.S. possession or D.C. is considered out-of-state for this purpose)
- 15.** Certified copy of divorce papers or court papers
- 16.** Certified copy of marriage certificate
- 17.** Charge card with photo and signature
- 18.** Certified copy of birth certificate or baptismal certificate
- 19.** Photo ID issued to an employee or contractor by a local state, or federal agency with signature
- 20.** Native American tribal document
- 21.** Paid bills with name
- 22.** Cancelled bank checks or money order receipts

**The Following Documents Are NOT Acceptable:**

- 1.** Vehicle registration or auto insurance
- 2.** Draft cards
- 3.** Charge cards or plates without photo
- 4.** Social Security cards
- 5.** Hospital cards or Blue Cross and Blue Shield Cards
- 6.** Welfare cards or cards without photo and signature
- 7.** Store I.D. cards without photo and signature
- 8.** Bank deposit or withdrawal forms

When approved, the duplicate license will be mailed to the applicant's last known residential address. A temporary license will be issued and is valid for fifteen (15) days or until the photo duplicate license is received.

A duplicate license may not be issued to an applicant who has been arrested for operating under the influence, or who has refused to submit to a breathalyzer or blood alcohol test. The burden of proof is on the applicant to prove positive identification and any credential that does not meet applicable requirements or standards by being vague or ambiguous may be refused.

## **ANATOMICAL GIFTS; ORGAN DONOR PROGRAM**

The words "**ORGAN DONOR**" will appear on a Massachusetts driver's license to indicate the licensee's willingness to donate their organ(s) upon death. A Donor Card is completed and retained by the applicant. The language on the license is meaningless without the Donor Card. Should the applicant wish to rescind their decision to be an organ donor, they need only destroy the Donor card.

## **LICENSE RENEWAL**

The applicant's **original** license shall expire on the applicant's fifth birthday following the date of issuance. All subsequent licenses will be valid for five years. Whenever possible the Massachusetts Registry of Motor Vehicles mails license renewal notification cards. However, the legal obligation to renew before the expiration date lies solely with the licensee. No license shall be issued or remain valid for more than five years. Massachusetts licensed drivers leaving the state or country for an extended period of time may renew their license up to one year in advance.

**Reasons for Non-Renewal:** Renewal of your license may not be granted if your license or right to operate has been suspended, or revoked, or you are listed as owing parking tickets, excise tax or have an outstanding citation for having abandoned a vehicle. You must present to the Registry, certification that the parking tickets, excise tax, or the abandoned vehicle violation has been satisfied before you renew.

If the Department of Revenue notifies the Registrar that a finding of child support delinquency has been made against a resident, or any person licensed to operate a motor vehicle in the Commonwealth, the Registrar must suspend or revoke that person's license or right to operate and the registration of any motor vehicle owned by such person. Under these circumstances the license, right to operate, or motor vehicle registration, will not be reinstated **or renewed** until the Registrar receives official notice from the Department of Revenue that the person is in compliance with a judgment or child support order. You may contact the Child Support Enforcement Unit of the Department of Revenue at 1-800-332-2733.

## **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

**If the licensee has a change of address, the licensee must notify the Registry in person or in writing of any change of address within 30 days. The Registry of Motor Vehicles will provide a special sticker for the reverse side of the license which should be filled in with the new address.**

## **VEHICLE REGISTRATION REQUIREMENTS**

Automobile registration is required for all motor vehicles before they can be operated on the ways of Massachusetts. A valid certificate of registration must be carried on the driver's person or in the vehicle being operated unless specifically exempted.

## **How To Obtain A Registration**

1. It is compulsory for you to have insurance. Liability coverage of \$20,000-\$40,000 and property damage of \$5,000 is required by law.
2. The insurance company will endorse the properly completed application.
3. Carefully answer all numbered questions on the application and file it at the nearest full service Registry Office.
  - A. A paid sales tax receipt or a sales tax exemption receipt must be filed with all new registrations. Sales Tax must be paid in cash, certified check, or money order. Questions of Sales Tax may be directed to the Massachusetts Department of Revenue, (617)727-4545.
  - B. The fee for registration varies with the type of vehicle and must be paid at the time the application is filed.
4. **The Registrar may refuse to register or may suspend or revoke a registration when he determines the vehicle is unsafe, improperly equipped, or otherwise unfit.**

For further information about registration requirements or transfers, contact any Registry Branch Office.

## **The Merit Rating Insurance System**

Massachusetts requires all motor vehicles and trailers to be insured. If you are at fault in an accident, convicted of a moving traffic violation, or file excessive claims for fire, theft, glass damage or vandalism to your car, it is reported to the Merit Rating Board and may result in an increase of your insurance premium.

If you are a safe driver, without a record of surchargeable events, your insurance premium charges may be reduced.

Questions about the Merit Rating system should be directed to the Merit Rating Board, 1135 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02120-2103, Tel. (617)351-4400.

## **H.P. PLATES/PLACARDS**

### **VETERANS PLATES**



In Massachusetts, qualifying disabled persons and disabled veterans may be issued special number plates or PLACARDS for the disabled or disabled veteran.

Motor vehicles with PLACARDS, "HP", or Disabled Veteran plates are permitted to park at meters without being subject to a fee or penalty. However, disabled persons and Disabled Veterans are not permitted to park in violation of any other parking rule or regulation. Any violation other than by a motor vehicle bearing "HP" or "Disabled Veteran" plates or a PLACARD is subject to the same fines and penalties as any other **illegally** parked car.

These privileges are granted **only** when the motor vehicle is actually in the process of being used for the transportation of the registered disabled person or registered disabled veteran. The privileges do not apply to any other person.

#### **H.P. Plate/PLACARD Qualifications:**

1. By amputation — suffered the loss of a foot, a hand, a leg, or an arm;
2. By paralysis — suffered the permanent loss of use of a foot, a hand, a leg, or an arm;
3. Legally blind and has a certificate from the Commission of the Blind, and must designate a licensed driver and "principal operator";
4. Chronic lung disease with a FEV-1 reading of less than one (1) liter with constant use of oxygen;

In order to apply for an "HP" plate, address correspondence to Registry of Motor Vehicles, Medical Affairs Branch, 1135 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02120-2103, requesting "HP" plate or PLACARD application. Applications are also available at branch office locations listed inside the back cover.

**NOTE:** If an applicant is a licensed driver it must be so stated on this application — otherwise a non-drivers' PLACARD shall be processed.

## **What Is An HP PLACARD?**

It is a special identification card authorized by the Registry, bearing the international handicapped symbol and an assigned I.D. number on the front. In addition, the disabled person's photograph and the name are on the back of the placard.

## **Who May Be Eligible For This PLACARD?**

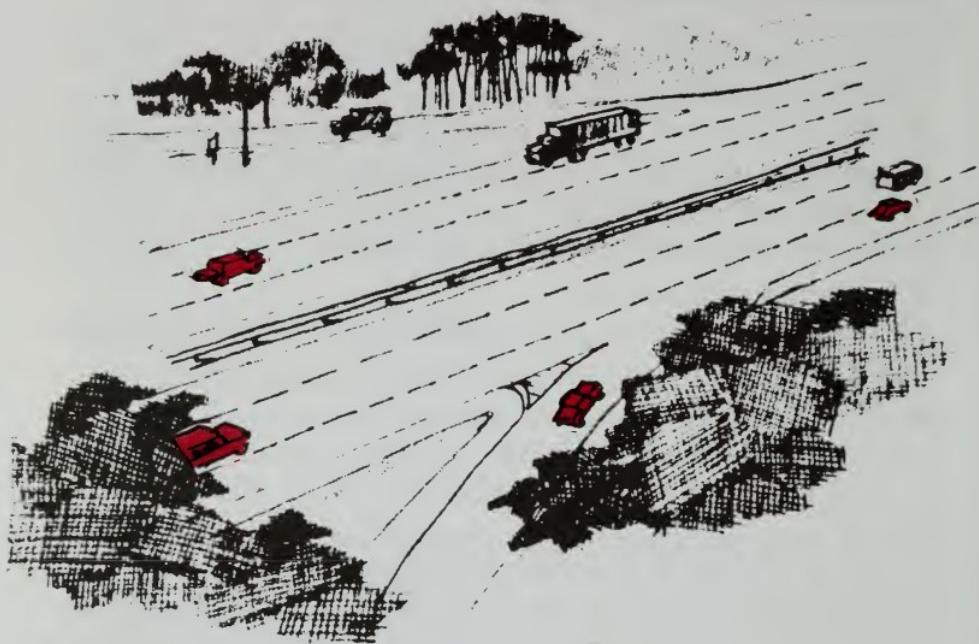
Any disabled person — child or adult — who qualifies under the Registry's Medical Affairs' Branch guidelines.

## **To Apply For Disabled Veteran's Plates:**

1. The applicant must first be certified by the Veteran's Administration on Form No. MA41, endorsed by the Veteran's Services Officer and obtainable at the John F. Kennedy Building, Room E111, Government Center, Boston, MA. Qualifying applicants must meet the same state requirements as for a HP plate. 100% disability does not necessarily entitle a Disabled Veteran to "D.V." plates.
2. Mail form MA41 and a completed application to the Registry of Motor Vehicles, Medical Affairs Branch, 1135 Tremont Street, Boston, MA 02120-2103.

## **CERTIFICATE OF TITLE**

- 1.** All states have a title law. Massachusetts has been a title state since September 1, 1972.
- 2.** A Certificate of Title is proof of ownership of the vehicle described on a title and is issued by the Title division of the Registry of Motor Vehicles.
- 3.** All passenger motor vehicles must be titled.
- 4.** All trucks must be titled.
- 5.** All trailers must be titled except those with a gross vehicle weight of 3000 lbs. or less (trailer and maximum load).
- 6.** An owner must make application for a Certificate of Title within ten days of purchase even if the vehicle is not going to be registered immediately.
- 7.** All titles are issued in the name of the owner or owners. However, if you have borrowed money to pay for the vehicle, the title will be mailed directly to the lienholder (bank, credit union, etc.) listed on the application (RMV-1) as having a financial interest in the vehicle.
- 8.** The title fee is \$50.00 and for a duplicate title the fee is \$25.00.
- 9.** When selling a vehicle which is titled, you must complete the back of the title called the "assignment," and give it to the buyer.



## PART II — RULES OF THE ROAD

This portion of the Driver's License Manual contains Massachusetts laws and safe driving rules that every applicant must know before obtaining a license to drive in Massachusetts. Study this information carefully before taking your written examination. Review it thoroughly before your road test.

The Registrar suggests that you keep this manual in your motor vehicle glove compartment as a handy reference for future safe driving.

# ALCOHOL AND DRIVING

"Research has shown that alcohol and driving just don't mix. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, alcohol has been found to be involved in approximately 50% of all traffic fatalities. The American Automobile Association (AAA) estimates that drivers are sixteen times more likely to be involved in a fatal accident when their Blood Alcohol Content reaches .08. According to M.G. L. Chapter 90, Section 24(e), when a driver takes a breath test and the result is a presence of .08 or greater of alcohol, there shall be a permissive inference that the individual was operating under the influence of alcohol. Additional provisions for drivers under age 21 mandate that they will lose their license or right to operate should they have a reading of .02 or greater.

Under the Administrative License Revocation provision of our Operating Under the Influence law, a driver who has a chemical test reading of .08 or greater (.02 or greater for drivers under age 21) will IMMEDIATELY have their Massachusetts license/permit confiscated by the police. After 15 days your license or right to operate on our roadways will be suspended for a 90 day period. Drivers under age 21 will face an **additional** 180 day suspension should they not take a mandatory Youth Alcohol Program. For a first conviction an individual will have their license or right to operate revoked for one year.

Medical studies have shown that there is a direct relationship between your alcohol consumption and the loss of driving skills. Alcohol impairs your ability to make judgements, slows your reaction time, and lowers the efficiency of your hearing and vision. The only sure way to avoid driving while intoxicated is not to drive after consuming alcoholic beverages.

If you have been drinking, ask a friend or relative to drive you home. **Remember, friends don't let friends drive drunk.**

**Violations of  
the law are  
serious  
offenses.**



**Fine or Jail**



**Loss  
of  
License**

## **Implied Consent Law**

In simple terms, the Massachusetts “Implied Consent Law” means that every individual operating a motor vehicle in this Commonwealth has pledged that he/she will submit to a breathalyzer or an analysis of their blood to determine the presence of alcohol if you are arrested for operating under the influence.

Accordingly, when any operator is **arrested** and charged with driving under the influence of intoxicating liquor, the arresting police department or agency is authorized to request the arrested operator to submit to a chemical test or analysis of his/her breath to determine the percentage of alcohol in the arrested operator's blood. Under the Administrative License Revocation provision of our Operating Under the Influence Law, if the operator refuses to take the breathalyzer test, the law requires the Police Department to IMMEDIATELY confiscate the operator's Massachusetts driver's license. After 15 days, the license or right to operate will be suspended for a period not less than 120 days and up to 1 year for such refusal (or between 180 days and 1 year for drivers under age 21) Additionally, drivers under 21 will incur an **additional** 180 day suspension should they not complete a mandatory Youth Alcohol Program.

## **MARIJUANA AND DRIVING**

In the last 15 years, an additional type of impairment has been a contributing factor in many traffic accidents. High levels of drugs have been found in the blood of many accident victims.

Marijuana delays a person's response to sights and sounds so that it takes a driver longer to react to a dangerous situation. Marijuana causes a severe loss of night vision, which is compounded by vehicles with tinted windshields, causing a combined loss of up to 70% of night vision.

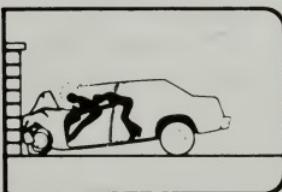
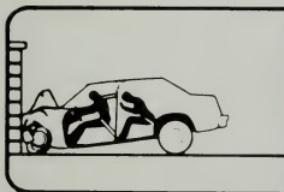
The ability to perform sequential tasks can also be affected by smoking marijuana. As a result, a marijuana smoker's biggest driving problems occur when faced with unexpected events, such as a car approaching from a side street or a child running out from between parked cars. **The greater the demands of a driving situation, the less able the marijuana user will be to cope.**

**The combined use of marijuana and alcohol is more hazardous than the use of either alone.** Research shows that nearly half of regular marijuana users combine alcohol with marijuana use. Just as drinking and driving don't mix, driving and drug use is a fatal mistake.

## **SAFETY BELTS — THE LIFE SAVERS IN A CAR**

### **Did you know that . . . ?**

- Traffic accidents are the leading killer of children and young adults.
- More than half of the accidents causing injury or death occur at speeds less than 40 m.p.h.
- In an accident, the impact force of an occupant with the interior of the car can be many times his/her weight. Injuries to the head are the most frequent cause of death to occupants in accidents.
- The chance of being killed in an accident is almost 25 times greater if one is thrown from the car.
- Seat belt use can reduce the risk of serious injury or death in a crash by 40–50%.



Safety belts and car safety seats for infants and young children greatly reduce the risk of serious or fatal injury in an accident.

In an accident safety belts can:

- \*Protect one from violently hitting the windshield, metal knobs, or other hard surfaces in a car;
- \*Protect one from being hurled out of the car onto the road;
- \*Protect one from being thrown against other occupants and injuring them; and
- \*Help a driver stay in position and maintain control of the car so that he/she does not cause a more serious accident.

## Safety Belt Tips

**SAFETY BELTS — A shoulder belt** should be used if it crosses the shoulder and chest. It should not cross the face or neck. It should be fairly snug and not twisted.

A **lap belt** should be low over the hips, snug and not twisted.



## MASSACHUSETTS SAFETY BELT LAW

Effective February 1, 1994 all drivers and passengers of private motor vehicles must wear a safety belt which is properly fastened and adjusted when traveling on all Massachusetts roadways.

Any person who operates a motor vehicle without a safety belt, or any person 16 and over who rides as a passenger in a motor vehicle without wearing a safety belt is subject to a \$25.00 fine.

Any operator of a motor vehicle is subject to an additional fine of \$25.00 for each passenger under age 16 who is not wearing a safety belt.

**CHILD PASSENGER SAFETY ACT** — This act requires all children five and under to be fastened in a properly-adjusted child safety seat or safety belt when riding in motor vehicles.

The fine is \$25.00 and may be waived if proof of a child safety seat purchase is given.

Any child older than five years of age, but not older than twelve years of age, must wear a safety belt which is properly adjusted and fastened when riding in a motor vehicle.

This law is a primary offense, and an operator may be stopped for not having children 12 and under restrained.



**Infant Seats**

17-20 lbs

**Convertible Seats**

Up to 40 lbs

(Toddler 17-40 lbs)

**Booster Seats**

30-60 lbs

## PARKING PROHIBITIONS

An improperly parked vehicle may increase the likelihood that an accident may occur. The law does not permit parking your vehicle:

1. In a crosswalk;
2. Within an intersection;
3. Upon a sidewalk;
4. Upon a roadway outside a thickly settled area;
5. Within 20 feet of an intersection or alley;
6. Within 10 feet of a hydrant;
7. In front of a driveway or a pedestrian sidewalk ramp used by the handicapped;
8. Within a posted bus stop;

9. On a state highway unless authorized. (If your vehicle is disabled, park only in the right hand lane or shoulder of the highway.)
10. In a manner known as “Double Parking”;
11. Unless both the wheels are within 12 inches of the curb, except in an area where angle parking is allowed.



## Horses

Horses and ponies, both ridden and hitched to carts are frequently seen along Massachusetts roads. (Only specified highways are forbidden to their use.) All animals are easily frightened by cars and other vehicles, and accidents, which can include serious human injury, must be avoided. **NEVER** sound your horn or make loud noises near a horse or pony.

Under state law (Chapter 90, Section 14) the driver of a vehicle **MUST:**

1. When traveling in the same direction as the animal, remain at an adequate distance, use reasonable speed, and exercise caution in passing.
2. **STOP** the vehicle if the animal appears frightened.
3. **STOP** the vehicle if the rider signals the driver to do so.



## Bicycle Safety Tips

### Drivers:

State law requires you to grant bicyclists the same rights as other motor vehicle operators. Bicyclists have the right to use all public ways except limited access or express state highways, where posted signs prohibit bicycles.

State law requires you to pass bicyclists at a reduced speed and at a safe distance, since they often swerve to avoid hazards on the right side of the roadway.

Double-check over your shoulder for approaching bicyclists before opening your car doors. At intersections, look all around you for bicyclists. When making a right turn, double-check over your shoulder to avoid cutting off bicyclists coming up behind you on the right.

### Bicyclists:

State law subjects you to the same basic state laws and regulations that apply to other motor vehicle operators.

State law requires you to obey all traffic signs and signals, to ride single file and **with** the flow of traffic, and to yield to pedestrians. Before entering or crossing a roadway, you should first **STOP**, then look left, look right, and look left again for traffic.

State law requires you to use both hand signals (see page 15) and an audible warning (such as a bell) to communicate with pedestrians and other roadway users when stopping, turning or passing. You may use either hand to signal. Bicyclists must have proper lights and reflectors when operating at night.

You may use sidewalks outside business districts, unless there is a local ordinance to the contrary.

As of March 1994, state law requires children under thirteen to wear an approved helmet when bicycling or riding as a passenger on public ways or property. An approved helmet will bear a ANSI, ASTM or Snell sticker. A properly fitted and fastened helmet sits just above the eyebrows. Adults can set an important example for children by always wearing a helmet when cycling.

Bike helmets reduce the risk of head injury by 85% and the risk of brain injury by 90% . . . so bike smart, wear a helmet!

For a free brochure with additional bicycle safety tips, please call Governor's Highway Safety Bureau at (617) 727-5073.

## School Bus Safety

Each day thousands of children ride school buses to and from school. Most of these buses are large and painted yellow. All of them have a sign that states "School Bus" and are equipped with lights capable of flashing.

Each child needs your help in making certain that the busing process is completed in a safe fashion. Children often act impulsively, and even after proper bus safety has been taught over and over again, they still do the unexpected.

When approaching from either direction a school bus bearing the words "**SCHOOL BUS**" and with its red lights flashing, you must bring your vehicle to a full stop well in front or in the rear of the bus. This requirement to stop does not apply to vehicles approaching from the opposite direction on a divided highway. You must not proceed until the warning signals on the bus are deactivated or until you receive directions to proceed from a police officer. You should continue to look all around you for children when you are authorized to proceed.

The speed limit in school zones is 20 mph, unless posted otherwise. Be alert for traffic signs, signals, and pavement markings that indicate a school zone and its speed limit.

Do your part in keeping our school children safe and healthy!

# TRAFFIC SIGNS

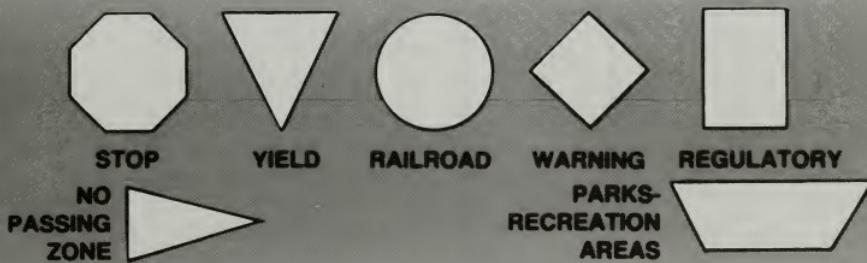
Traffic Signs Inform, Warn, and Regulate. The color and shape of traffic signs have special meanings and informed drivers should know them.

## COLOR

1. **Red** — indicates stop or a prohibition.
2. **Green** — gives directional guidance and indicates where movement is permitted.
3. **Yellow** — indicates a general warning.
4. **Black or White** — regulates speed, direction, etc.
5. **Blue** — motorist services (hotels, gas, etc.).
6. **Brown** — public recreation and scenic guidance (parks, etc.).
7. **Orange** — construction and maintenance warning (detour, etc.)

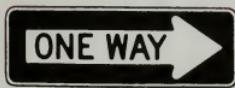
## SHAPES

1. **Octagon** — Stop.
2. **Diamonds** — Signifies warnings.
3. **Rectangular** — a) longer side vertical provides traffic regulation; b) longer side horizontal give guidance information.
4. **Inverted Triangle** — Yield.
5. **Pennant** — No Passing.
6. **Pentagon** — Schools
7. **Circle** — Railroad.



**REGULATORY SIGNS** — The United States is moving toward an international system of traffic control that emphasizes pictures and symbolic signs rather than written messages. While European nations are adopting the U.S. "Stop" sign, the U.S. is turning to the more international standards with the red and white "Yield" and "Do not Enter" signs, and the use of the red circle with a diagonal slash to indicate prohibited movements. (Samples below.)





**Fire Engines, Police Vehicles and Ambulances:** On call have the right of way and operators must **not** willfully and maliciously obstruct or slow down their progress. At the sound of a siren every operator must immediately drive as far as possible to the right of the road and stop until the emergency vehicle has passed.

**WARNING SIGNS** — Warning signs warn the driver that he/she is approaching a potential hazard such as a crossroad, curve, railroad crossing, etc.



RIGHT  
TURN



LEFT  
TURN



WINDING  
ROAD (RIGHT)



STOP  
AHEAD



YIELD  
AHEAD



SIGNAL  
AHEAD



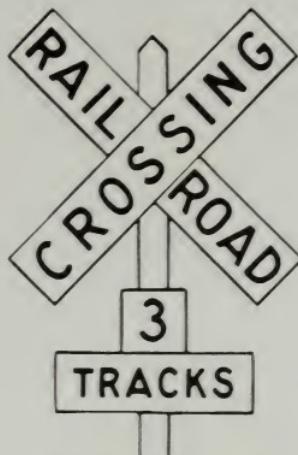
WINDING  
ROAD (LEFT)



MERGING  
TRAFFIC  
(FROM RIGHT)



NO PASSING  
ZONE



RAILROAD CROSSING



FIRE  
STATION



ROAD  
NARROWS  
(FROM RIGHT)



HILL



DIVIDED  
HIGHWAY



DIVIDED  
HIGHWAY  
ENDS



SLIPPERY  
WHEN WET



HANDICAPPED  
CROSSING



PLAYGROUND



LOW  
VERTICAL  
CLEARANCE



NARROW  
BRIDGE



PAVEMENT  
ENDS



EQUESTRIAN  
CROSSING



CATTLE  
CROSSING



DEER  
CROSSING



PEDESTRIAN  
CROSSING



BIKE  
CROSSING



SCHOOL  
ZONE



SCHOOL  
CROSSING

# CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE DEVICES

Various traffic control devices are used in construction and maintenance work areas to direct drivers or pedestrians safely through the work zone and to provide for the safety of the highway workers.

The most commonly used traffic control devices are signs, barricades, drums, cones, tubes, flashing arrow panels, and flagpersons. Orange is the basic color for these devices.

Construction and maintenance signs are used to notify drivers of unusual or potentially dangerous conditions in or near work areas.



Barricades, vertical panels, drums, cones, and tubes are the most commonly used devices to alert drivers of unusual or potentially dangerous conditions in highway and street work areas and to guide drivers safely through the work zone. At night, they are often equipped with flashing or steady burn lights.



BARRICADE



CONE



DRUM



BARRICADE

The diagonal stripes on the barricade or vertical panel guide the driver towards the direction to which traffic is to pass. Stripes sloping downward to the right mean the driver should bear to the right. Conversely, stripes sloping downward to the left mean bear to the left.



Large flashing or sequencing arrow panels may be used in work zones both day and night to guide drivers into certain traffic lanes and to inform them that part of the road or street ahead of them is closed.



# PEDESTRIAN SAFETY TIPS



## Drivers:

State law requires you to yield to pedestrians using or entering a crosswalk in your immediate path of travel. Do not allow your vehicle to block a crosswalk.

You must stop for pedestrians at signalized intersections displaying both **RED** and **YELLOW** lights.

Do not pass another vehicle stopped or slowing for a pedestrian.

## Pedestrians:

State law requires you to use a crosswalk when one is available. When crossing at a signalized intersection, use the pedestrian push button and wait for the WALK signal. Intersections without a push button will automatically give you a WALK signal. Be patient!

Before you cross a roadway, STOP at the curb, then look left, and look right for traffic. Be alert while crossing. Be especially alert at intersections that allow "right on red."

You must use a sidewalk when one is available. When no sidewalk is available on a local roadway, you should walk on the shoulder facing traffic.

Wear clothing with bright colors or reflective strips, especially at night.

## Service Signs:



CAMPING  
(TRAILER)



ACCESS FOR  
HANDICAPPED



GAS



CAMPING  
(TENT)



DIESEL



LODGING



TRAILER  
SANITARY  
STATION



REST  
AREA



HOSPITAL



FOOD



PHONE



INFORMATION

## **ENERGY SAVING = MONEY SAVING**

There are two reasons why drivers should drive moderately:

1. To save energy. There is a limited amount of petroleum left in the world. Many experts say about 30 to 40 years of present-day use will wipe out the supply.
2. To save money. Petroleum products will be more expensive in the foreseeable future.

Most cars get over 20 percent more miles per gallon at 55 miles per hour on the highway than they do at 70 m.p.h. If a car has an average fuel economy of 15 miles per gallon, with a 17 gallon tank, the driver will get over 50 miles more out of each tankful of gas.

**Smooth starts save gasoline**, engines, and tires. Minimize braking — anticipate speed changes. As soon as the driver sees a red light ahead, he/she should take his/her foot off the accelerator.

Never idle a car for more than a minute. It takes less gas to restart the car than it takes to let it idle. In addition to the safety advantage of having well-treaded tires, the driver should always check air pressure. If the air pressure in tires is not sufficient, the operator will use more gasoline. Regular tuneups can help you save as much as 10 percent a year on gasoline costs.

# **RULES OF THE ROAD**

## **More Questions and Answers**

### **Plates and Registration**

- 1. Q.** What happens to your registration when you sell your car?  
**A.** The registration ends. The new owner cannot drive the car without getting a new registration.
- 2. Q.** What must you do when you sell your car?  
**A.** Fill out the notice on your registration certificate. Write the date you sold the car. Write the name and address of the new owner. Return the registration to the Registry.
- 3. Q.** Who is responsible for a car on the road that is not registered, does not have the correct number plates or that does not have the required safety equipment?  
**A.** The owner, the driver, the person in charge, or all three are responsible.
- 4. Q.** What is your duty as owner or person in control of a car?  
**A.** You must be careful about giving your car to someone else to drive. You must make sure that this person has a valid license, is competent and has legal authority to drive your car.

### **Learners' Permits**

- 5. Q.** How old do you have to be to get a Learner's Permit?  
**A.** In order to obtain a Learner's Permit, you must be 16 years of age or over.
- 6. Q.** What must you do to your Learner's Permit or Driver's License to make it valid?  
**A.** You must write your name in the space provided on the Learner's Permit or Driver's License to make it valid.

- 7. Q.** If a police officer asks you to sign your name in his presence, what must you do?
- A.** The law requires you to sign your name if asked to do so by a police officer.
- 8. Q.** What does the law say about driving with a Learner's Permit?
- A.** The law says that a person driving with a Learner's Permit must be accompanied by an operator, duly licensed by his/her home state, who is 18 years of age or over, who is sitting beside the driver and who has had at least one year of driving experience.
- 9. Q.** Who is responsible for the acts of a driver who is driving with a Learner's Permit?
- A.** Both the driver and the licensed individual who accompanies the driver are responsible for the acts of the driver with a Learner's Permit.

## **License Information**

- 10. Q.** What is a Junior Operator's License.
- A.** A Junior Operator's License is a license issued to a person under 18 years of age who may not drive between 1:00 a.m. and 4:00 a.m. unless accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
- 11. Q.** For how long is your Driver's License valid?
- A.** Your Driver's License is valid for five (5) years. However, your original license will expire on your fifth birthday following the date it was issued.
- 12. Q.** What must you as a driver or motor vehicle owner do when you move to another address?
- A.** You must notify the Registry of Motor Vehicles in writing within 30 days of any change in address.

## **Accident Information**

- 13. Q.** What must you do if you are involved in an accident as the driver of a motor vehicle?
- A.** You must give your name, address, and registration number to any person injured and to the owner or person in charge of the property damaged; and you must show your Driver's License if asked to do so.
- 14. Q.** What accidents must you report?
- A.** You must report an accident in which someone is killed, hurt, or if there are damages in excess of \$1,000.00 to a car or other property. A written accident report must be sent to the Registrar of Motor Vehicles and to the Police Department in the city or town where the accident happened within five days of the accident. Accident report forms are available at all police stations.
- 15. Q.** What must you do if a dog or a cat is killed or injured by your car?
- A.** You must report such an accident to the owner of the dog or cat, or to the police in the city or town where the animal was hit.
- 16. Q.** What can you do to make yourself and others safer while in your car?
- A.** You must wear and require your passengers to wear safety belts. The law requires that a child less than five years old must wear a safety belt or be in a special child safety seat. Adults and children between ages five and twelve must use seat belts. The operator and each passenger at least 16 years old can be fined \$25.00. The operator is liable for the fine for each person under age 16 that is not secured by a safety belt.

- 17. Q.** What does the law say about having objects in your car or near you that could prevent you from driving safely?
- A.** You must not place objects in the car or near you that would interfere with safe driving. You should not have objects like baby shoes, beads, statues, etc. hanging or placed in such a way as to obstruct your view of the road.
- 18. Q.** Is it against the law to wear headphones while driving?
- A.** Yes, you may be fined if convicted, and your license may be suspended.

## **Alcohol, Drugs and Penalties**

- 19. Q.** When you become a licensed Massachusetts driver what do you agree to do regarding your use of alcohol?
- A.** You agree to drive soberly and, if stopped by the police for driving under the influence, to take a chemical breath test (breathalyzer).
- 20. Q.** What is the penalty for refusing the breathalyzer test?
- A.** It is mandatory that you lose your license for one-hundred twenty (120) days, if an adult, one hundred eighty (180) days if under 21 years old or have a prior conviction for refusal to take such a test or one (1) year if you have been convicted of refusing such a test twice in the past ten years.
- 21. Q.** What effect does alcohol have on a driver?
- A.** Alcohol slows the driver's reaction time and affects the driver's judgment. It can also affect the driver's hearing and vision. The only sure way to avoid driving while intoxicated is not to drive after drinking alcoholic beverages.
- 22. Q.** Will small amounts of beer, wine or whiskey impair your driving ability?
- A.** Yes.

- 23. Q.** What is the active ingredient in beer, wine or whiskey?
- A.** The active ingredient in beer, wine and whiskey is ethyl alcohol, which is a depressant (downer).
- 24. Q.** How much alcohol is in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  ounces of whiskey, 12 ounces of beer or 3 to 5 ounces of wine?
- A.** There is approximately  $\frac{1}{2}$  ounce of alcohol in each.
- 25. Q.** Will the quantities of alcohol in beer, wine or whiskey affect the functions necessary to drive safely?
- A.** Your reaction time, judgment, vision, and coordination will all be affected by the alcohol, even when taken in small quantities.
- 26. Q.** How can you sober up quickly?
- A.** You can't. There is no fast way to speed up the way your body eliminates alcohol once it enters the blood. Metabolizing alcohol takes about one hour and fifteen minutes for each ounce of alcohol.
- 27. Q.** How does alcohol reach your blood stream?
- A.** By the process of absorption. Alcohol doesn't require digestion. Your liver has to eliminate the alcohol, and that is why only with time and waiting can you get sober. Black coffee, cold showers, exercise, food, drinking more alcohol or other other liquids are all ineffective myths.
- 28. Q.** What is a blood alcohol content (BAC)?
- A.** It is the amount of alcohol in your blood stream and is directly related to your weight, food in your stomach, physical condition and how many drinks you have had. The higher your BAC the more severe your impairment and potential for being involved in an accident.

- 29. Q.** Under current Massachusetts law, what is the penalty for the first driving under the influence offense?
- A.** A guilty finding for the first offense may result in the following penalties: imprisonment for up to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  years, a fine of up to \$5000, and your driver's license revoked for 1 year.
- 30. Q.** What is the penalty under current Massachusetts law for operating a vehicle while drinking an alcoholic beverage or being in possession of an open can or bottle or other container having an alcoholic beverage in it?
- A.** If you are convicted, you may be fined \$100 to \$500, and your license may be suspended.
- 31. Q.** What effect does marijuana have on a driver?
- A.** Marijuana affects the driver's night vision and slows down the driver's ability to react to dangerous driving situations.
- 32. Q.** Is it against the law to drive while on marijuana?
- A.** Yes, the penalties are the same for driving under the influence of alcohol. See question 29.

## Speed Limits

- 33. Q.** What is the basic speed law?
- A.** The speed of a car must be safe for pedestrians, road conditions, and other traffic.
- 34. Q.** When do you have to drive slower than the posted speed limit?
- A.** You must drive slower than the posted speed limit when there is any situation which is dangerous.
- 35. Q.** What is a "thickly settled district"?
- A.** A thickly settled district is a place where houses are less than 200 feet apart for  $\frac{1}{4}$  of a mile or more, or a place built up with business buildings.

- 36. Q.** What speed may be considered unreasonable in a thickly settled district?
- A.** Unless otherwise posted, a speed greater than 30 m.p.h. may be considered unreasonable in a thickly settled district.
- 37. Q.** What speed may be considered unreasonable outside of a thickly settled district?
- A.** A speed greater than 50 m.p.h. on a divided highway and a speed greater than 40 m.p.h. on other roads may be considered unreasonable.
- 38. Q.** What speed may be considered unreasonable in a school zone?
- A.** A speed greater than 20 m.p.h. may be considered unreasonable.

## Brakes

- 39. Q.** What does the law say about brakes on cars?
- A.** The law requires that cars have two braking systems in good working order, a foot brake and a parking brake to hold the car when parked.
- 40. Q.** When going down a steep hill, should you use your brakes?
- A.** Only use brakes to keep control and to keep the car at a safe speed. It is better to put the car in a lower gear when going down a steep hill because the engine acts like a brake. If your car is standard shift, put it into first or second gear. If your car is automatic, put it into lower gear.
- 41. Q.** What can you do if your brakes do not work because they are wet?
- A.** Drive slowly, holding the brake pedal down. This will make the brakes heat up and the heat will dry the brakes.

- 42. Q.** What do you do when your car begins to skid (slip or move out of control)?
- A.** Steer your car into the skid. If the rear of the car is skidding to the right, steer to the right. If the rear of the car is skidding to the left, steer to the left. When you have control of the car, use your brakes lightly.
- 43. Q.** What is hydroplaning?
- A.** Hydroplaning is when your tires ride on top of the water on the road. Skidding and loss of steering may result from hydroplaning. Good tires with deep grooves reduce hydroplaning. To prevent hydroplaning, slow down.

## Lights and Other Equipment

- 44. Q.** What lights do you need when driving at night?
- A.** Cars must have two (2) approved white lights on the front and two (2) red lights on the back mounted one on each side. Also, the car must have two (2) red stop lights. There must be a white light to light up the rear number plate.
- 45. Q.** When do drivers have to turn on their lights?
- A.** Drivers must use their lights from  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour after the sun goes down until  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour before the sun comes up, and during any period when visibility is reduced enough to make operation dangerous without lights.
- 46. Q.** When should drivers lower their head lights to low beam?
- A.** Drivers should put their head lights on low beam when an oncoming car is within 500 feet, or when driving on well lighted roads.
- 47. Q.** When may a spotlight be used?
- A.** Drivers may only use a spotlight to read signs, or an emergency light if the headlights are not working. Also, the spotlight may shine no more than 2 feet above the road at a distance of 30 feet from your car.

- 48. Q.** Your car must have brakes and lights. What other equipment is required on your car?
- A.** Your car must have a horn, a muffler, a lock for the ignition, windshield wipers, and directional signals.
- 49. Q.** If the Registrar decides that a car is unsafe to drive or is not properly equipped, what can the Registrar do?
- A.** The Registrar can refuse to register the car. If the owner already has a registration, the Registrar may suspend or revoke it.

## **Vehicle Inspection Stickers**

- 50. Q.** Inspection stickers are valid for how long?
- A.** All inspection stickers are valid for one year unless the vehicle is sold or transferred (sticker must be removed). Vehicles must be reinspected prior to the date of expiration indicated on the sticker.
- 51. Q.** If you buy a car do you have to have it inspected?
- A.** Yes. You must have a newly registered car inspected within 7 days of the date of the sale. This is required even if the car has an inspection sticker on the windshield that was issued to the prior owner.

## **Traffic Lights and Signs**

- 52. Q.** What does a steady green light on a traffic control signal mean?
- A.** Proceed, subject to the safety of pedestrians and vehicles within the intersection, except where a sign is placed indicating that certain movements are prohibited.
- 53. Q.** What does a flashing green light on a traffic signal or beacon mean?
- A.** Intersection or crosswalk in use or subject to use — proceed with caution and be prepared to stop for a change of lights.

- 54. Q.** What does it mean when a green light changes to a yellow light?
- A.** If you are proceeding on the green light and the light changes to yellow, you must stop if it is safe to do so.
- 55. Q.** What does a flashing yellow light mean?
- A.** The flashing yellow light means “Warning: Proceed with Caution.”
- 56. Q.** What does it mean when a red light shows alone?
- A.** A red light means stop.
- 57. Q.** What does a flashing red light or a stop sign tell you?
- A.** You *must* stop. Then move when it is safe.
- 58. Q.** Cars are stopped at a red light. A person is crossing the street. The light changes but the person has not finished crossing. What must the driver do?
- A.** The driver must wait until the person finishes walking across the street before proceeding.
- 59. Q.** What do red and yellow lights showing together mean.
- A.** Red and yellow lights showing together mean that cars must stop until the lights change. People may cross the street.
- 60. Q.** What does a red traffic light with a green arrow mean?
- A.** If there is a green arrow, you may drive in the direction of the arrow. An up and down arrow tells you to drive straight ahead. If the arrow points to the right, you may turn right. If the arrow points to the left, you may turn left.
- 61. Q.** When may you turn right on a red light?
- A.** You may turn right on a red light only after coming to a full stop unless a posted sign states “No turn on red.”

- 62. Q.** What do the red-yellow-red bands painted on a traffic light pole mean?
- A.** The red-yellow-red bands mean that there is a special walk light for people who cross the street. People can push a button to activate the walk light.
- 63. Q.** You see a sign “YIELD.” What do you do?
- A.** A “YIELD” sign means that you must stop unless you can enter the intersection safely without interfering with other traffic.

## Other Rules and Responsibilities

- 64. Q.** Does a driver have to signal when stopping or turning?
- A.** Yes, a driver must give a signal when stopping or turning. The signal may be a mechanically or electrically operated signal or a hand/arm signal given by the driver. Signals should be given at least 100 feet ahead of the turning point.
- 65. Q.** What is an intersecting way?
- A.** An intersecting way is any road that meets another road whether or not it crosses.
- 66. Q.** What does a solid line painted next to a broken line on a two lane roadway mean?
- A.** A solid line painted next to a broken line means the driver may not pass other vehicles if the solid line is painted on the driver’s side of the road.
- 67. Q.** What does a solid double yellow line painted on a roadway mean?
- A.** A solid double yellow line means that a driver must not cross the double line except when entering or leaving a driveway.
- 68. Q.** Who has the right of way at a rotary?
- A.** Cars going around the rotary have the right of way and may go before cars entering the rotary.

- 69. Q.** Who has the legal right to go first at an intersection?
- A.** If two cars arrive at the intersection, at the same time, from different directions, then the car on the right has the right of way.
- 70. Q.** If you miss your exit on a highway, what should you do?
- A.** You should keep going until the next exit. Never back up on a highway.
- 71. Q.** What should you do if you have an emergency and must stop on a highway?
- A.** You should drive off the highway onto the breakdown lane before stopping.
- 72. Q.** Do you have to keep your vehicle in the right lane when traveling on a highway?
- A.** Yes, when it is available you must stay in the right lane on a highway except when passing other vehicles.
- 73. Q.** What do you do before driving away from a curb or parking space?
- A.** Watch for cars that are coming. Signal. Move when it is safe.
- 74. Q.** How do you make a right turn at an intersection?
- A.** Keep as close as you can to the right curb as you make your turn.
- 75. Q.** How do you make a left turn at an intersection?
- A.** Keep next to and to the right of the center line of the road. Then keep next to and to the right of the center line of the road you are turning into. Let oncoming traffic go first, and be sure it is safe before you turn.
- 76. Q.** How do you make a left turn when you are on a one way street?
- A.** Move into the left lane. Stay close to the left curb while making the turn.

- 77. Q.** If you come to a curve in the road and cannot see ahead, what must you do?
- A.** Keep to the right and slow down.
- 78. Q.** Another car is traveling in the same direction, and you want to pass it. What must you do?
- A.** You must keep to the left of the other car. Give yourself enough room to pass safely.
- 79. Q.** Is passing on the right permitted?
- A.** Passing on the right is permitted only on a multi-lane barrier-divided highway or on a one way street. You may also pass on the right when the vehicle in the left lane is turning left or is preparing to turn left.
- 80. Q.** If you want to pass another car, how far ahead do you need to see before passing?
- A.** You must be able to see 400 feet or more ahead if you are preparing to pass another car.
- 81. Q.** What must you do when another car is passing or attempting to pass your car?
- A.** You must move to the right to permit the vehicle to pass on the left unless you are traveling on a way that permits vehicles to pass on the right. You should not increase your speed until the other car has safely passed.
- 82. Q.** What must you do when you are driving out of a private road, driveway or garage?
- A.** Stop before you drive across the sidewalk. Let pedestrians and other cars go first.
- 83. Q.** If a person is walking in the street on which you are driving, what must you do?
- A.** Slow down or stop if necessary. People walking have the right to go first.

**84. Q.** What does the law say a driver must do at crosswalks?

- A.** The driver shall not pass any other car which has stopped at a marked crosswalk to allow a pedestrian to cross. No driver shall stop his vehicle on a marked crosswalk.

**85. Q.** What must you do when you come to a trolley where people are getting on and off?

- A.** The people have the right to go first. Do not drive closer than 8 feet to the step of the trolley.

**86. Q.** A vehicle with a school bus sign and alternately flashing red signal lights stops. What must you do?

- A.** When the red lights on the vehicle with the school bus sign are flashing alternately, you must stop before reaching such a vehicle, even if you are going in the opposite direction. You must allow the children to get on and off the bus. When the lights stop flashing you may go. If a school bus stops on the other side of a divided highway (with a barrier in the middle), you do not have to stop.

**87. Q.** What must the driver do when a blind person is trying to cross the street with a white cane or is guided by a dog that is wearing a "U" shaped harness?

- A.** The driver must stop and make sure that the blind person has safely crossed the street before continuing.

**88. Q.** What must you do if a fire truck is going to a fire or answering an alarm and the fire truck comes near you?

- A.** Drive to the right and stop. (Do not follow closer than 300 feet behind a fire truck that is answering an alarm.)

**89. Q.** What does the law say about driving near a fire?

- A.** The law says that you must not drive over the fire hose unless a fireman says it is all right. Do not park closer than 800 feet to the fire.

- 90. Q.** What must you do when a funeral procession comes near your car?
- A.** The law forbids you to cut through or disrupt cars in a funeral procession. You may be fined if you violate this law.
- 91. Q.** What must you do when you come to a cow, horse or other animal that someone is leading, riding, or driving?
- A.** If you are driving in one direction, and the animal is moving in the other, stop and wait until the animal passes. If your car and the animal are moving in the same direction, be careful when passing the animal. You must stop and turn off your motor if the animal seems afraid.
- 92. Q.** What must you do when you approach train tracks?
- A.** Slow down. Then proceed carefully.
- 93. Q.** When you leave your car unattended in the street, what should you do?
- A.** Stop the motor, set the brake, make sure ignition is locked and remove the key. Lock your car.
- 94. Q.** Who can park in spaces marked "Handicapped Only"?
- A.** Only disabled people with special "HP" number plates/PLACARDS issued to the handicapped or DISABLED VETERAN number plates may park in spaces marked "Handicapped Only."
- 95. Q.** What are the rights of a person riding a bicycle in the street?
- A.** Except for limited access or express state highways, persons riding bicycles have the same rights as cars to use the road. Bicycle riders may move in traffic and make turns the same way cars do and obey the traffic laws.

- 96. Q.** Is it against the law to throw glass or garbage on the road or any public or private land?
- A.** Yes, it is a violation to litter. You may be fined if you do so.
- 97. Q.** Is it against the law to throw lighted cigarettes or anything else that can cause a fire near a forest or open field?
- A.** Yes. You may be fined and your license may be suspended.
- 98. Q.** Are children under the age of 12 required to wear seat belts or be carried in a properly fastened safety seat?
- A.** Yes, the law requires this or you, the driver, may be fined.
- 99. Q.** What is one safety advantage to wearing seat belts?
- A.** It may keep you from being thrown out of your car onto the highway.
- 100. Q.** Will the shoulder restraint of a safety belt keep you from hitting your windshield or steering column?
- A.** Yes.
- 101. Q.** What is the shape of a "Railroad Crossing" sign?
- A.** The shape of a "Railroad Crossing" sign is round.
- 102. Q.** What is the shape of a "No Passing" sign?
- A.** The shape of a "No Passing" sign is pennant.
- 103. Q.** What is the shape of a "Yield" sign?
- A.** The shape of a "Yield" sign is an upside down triangle.
- 104. Q.** What is the shape of a "Stop" sign?
- A.** A "Stop" sign has eight equal sides.
- 105. Q.** Should a bicyclist ride on the right of the road or on the left?
- A.** A bicyclist should ride to the right of the road and move to the center when making a left turn.

- 106. Q.** Are there laws in Massachusetts that regulate the operation of bicycles?
- A.** Yes! Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 85, Sec. 11B.
- 107. Q.** A bicyclist may go through red lights and stop signs when it is safe to do so, True or False?
- A.** False!!
- 108. Q.** How do you safely dispose of hazardous auto fluids including used oil and transmission fluids?
- A.** Used oil and other hazardous wastes should be returned, with receipt, to the place where new fluids were bought. The store or garage is responsible for disposal.

# **REGISTRY FEES**

## **Learner's Permits Appointments:**

Class A	\$15.00
Class B	\$15.00
Class C	\$15.00
Class D	\$15.00
Motorcycle	\$15.00
Additional required Exams and Endorsements	\$10.00 each

## **Licenses:**

Application Fee	\$20.00
Class A	\$52.50
Class B	\$40.00
Class C	\$33.75
Class D	\$33.75
Motorcycle only	\$33.75
Motorcycle endorsement	\$15.00

## **Registrations:**

Passenger Car 2 years	\$35.00*
Reserved 2 years	\$75.00*
Vanity 1 year	\$70.00*
Certificate of Title	\$50.00

## **Duplicates:**

License	\$15.00
Learner's Permit	\$15.00
Registration	\$15.00
Plate Replacement	\$10.00 (cost per plate)
Title	\$25.00

\*Renew by mail discount \$5.00 (Registration renewal only).

All fees quoted in this manual are  
based on 1993 regulations and are  
**subject to change.**

# **REGISTRY "MALL" LOCATIONS**

## **LICENSE RENEWAL AND OUT-OF-STATE CONVERSIONS ONLY**

Apply at any of the following Mall locations:

*out of state conversions*

*7/98*

**EMERALD SQUARE MALL** — 999 So. Washington St., No. Attleboro, 02760

**FAIRFIELD MALL** — 591 Memorial Dr., Chicopee, 01020

**GALLERIA MALL** — 100 Cambridgeside Place, Cambridge, 02141

**GREENDALE MALL** — 7 Neponset St., Worcester, 01606

**LIBERTY TREE MALL** — Endicott St., Danvers, 01923

**MEADOW GLEN MALL** — 3850 Mystic Valley Parkway, Medford 02155

**METHUEN MALL** — 90 Pleasant Valley St., Methuen, 01844

**MIDDLESEX MALL** — 43 Middlesex TnPk, Burlington, 01803

**MOHAWK MALL** — 91 Main St., Greenfield, 01301

**WESTGATE MALL** — 200 Westgate Dr., Suite 12, Brockton, 02401

**HOURS OF OPERATION:** Hours of operation for Mall locations can be obtained by telephoning our Customer Phone Center at one of the numbers listed below.

Bank check, personal check and credit card (MasterCard or Visa) only at Mall locations (no cash accepted).

## **CUSTOMER PHONE CENTER**

The Registry of Motor Vehicles has a centralized customer phone center to answer any question on Registry procedure. This is the same phone center to contact to schedule a road test. Also, through the phone center, you can renew a vehicle's registration or pay a Civil Motor Vehicle Infraction (speeding ticket, etc.) both using MasterCard or Visa. The phone center is operational Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m. until 7:00 p.m. There are more than two hundred recorded messages on registry procedures and locations available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

## **PHONE CENTER NUMBERS**

800-858-3926 (In 413/508 area codes)

617-351-4500 (In 617 area code)

License  
Express  
offices will  
no longer  
process

